

Foreshadowing and Suspense

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

foreshadowing: the technique of hinting about something that will occur later in a story

suspense: a feeling of growing tension and excitement felt by a reader

HERE'S HOW

Step 1: Identify and analyze foreshadowing. Foreshadowing creates suspense and makes readers eager to find out what will happen.

- **Think about plot events.** Check plot events for hints suggesting likely problems or conflicts to come. Ask: “What adds tension to this section of the text? How does the writer make the story exciting?”
- **Look for clues in dialogue or description.** Notice words that evoke emotions.
- **Predict what will happen next.** Add these clues to what you know from your own experience and previous reading to predict what’s coming.

EXAMPLE Ari and his dad were driving home from soccer practice when the snow began. Mr. Gold switched on the windshield wipers and frowned. “I wish I’d had a chance to get new tires,” he said. “Ours are really worn out.”

Step 2: Identify and analyze suspense. Suspense makes a reader curious about the outcome of a story or an event within a story.

- **Examine your feelings as you read.** Think about story events that create tension or excitement. As suspense mounts, these feelings get stronger.
- **Identify the rising action of the plot.** Generally suspense mounts steadily as events lead up to the high point or climax.
- **Focus on the main questions you have about the story’s outcome.** A writer creates suspense by raising questions in a reader’s mind. When you wonder or worry about a story’s outcome, you are feeling suspense.

EXAMPLE By now, the snow was falling so hard that the windshield wipers couldn’t keep up. Trying to climb Bear Hill, the car fishtailed left, then right. “I don’t know if we can make it up,” muttered Mr. Gold, shifting into low gear. Suddenly, at the top of the hill, an 18-wheeler truck jackknifed into their lane. Mr. Gold slammed on his brakes, but nothing happened.